

Pressure from All Sides: A Comparative History of the Issues and Policies Related to the
Gay and Lesbian Student Populations of The Ohio State University and The University of
Michigan, 1971 to 1994

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By

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I dedicate this thesis to the memory of William H., Hall, a dedicated student advocate and supporter of diversity at Ohio State for 28 years,

and

to all gay men and lesbians that have come before me.

I did this for all of you.

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“I don’t want the University to become known as a happy home for these people,” said University of Michigan Executive Vice President Marvin L Nichuss in a June 28, 1962 article of the *Michigan Daily*, referring to the presence of gay men.¹ In 1958, 1960, and 1962 the university, in conjunction with the Ann Arbor Police Department, conducted raids on known homosexual gathering places and arrested dozens of men each time. The men were usually charged with “gross indecency” or “attempting to procure gross indecency,” both of which were felonies at the time.² When one of those accused happened to be a student at Michigan, university officials would typically suspend him until the student could obtain a letter from a psychologist stating that he was no longer a “social risk.”³ Faculty members who found themselves among the accused were routinely “encouraged” to resign by Michigan’s administration and pressured until they left the university.⁴ Although these actions may seem absurd in a contemporary environment that is more tolerant of gays, the road to establish that tolerance was a difficult and complex one.

In the present-day United States, homosexuality is no longer a criminal offense, and an ongoing and active social dialogue about gay and lesbian rights exists in the public sphere. The fact remains, however, that raids and arrests incriminating homosexuality were commonplace in America for much of the 20th century. The American Psychiatric Association officially classified homosexuality as a mental illness until 1973,⁵ and consensual sex between adults of the same sex was illegal in some states until the U.S. Supreme Court declared such laws unconstitutional in the 2003 case, *Lawrence v. Texas*.⁶ Despite these and other advances for homosexual rights that have taken place in the United States, many people still consider homosexuality to be an

undesirable trait, and gays and lesbians are often faced with prejudice and discrimination in their daily lives.

The homosexual rights movement in America has a long and diverse history and this thesis will elucidate a small part of this movement through an examination of how it materialized at The Ohio State University and the University of Michigan from the late 1960s until the mid 1990s. This will be accomplished by looking at how the universities responded to gay and lesbian student demands and concerns, specifically regarding the schools' nondiscrimination policies and the creation of gay and lesbian student services offices. This period was one of intense debate and great change, and each school reacted to the demands of its various stakeholders in unique ways. In order to fully understand the events as they occurred at Michigan and Ohio State, however, it may be beneficial to first examine the history of the gay and lesbian rights movement in America in greater depth.

In 1924, Henry Gerber of Chicago, Illinois founded the first public gay organization in the country—the Society for Human Rights. The Society existed for only about one year before the police arrested Gerber and the few others who had joined him. Although they were all released soon after their arrests due to a problem with the evidence related to their case, the police action effectively ended the gay and lesbian movement in America for the next several decades. Gerber later said of the situation “...we were up against a solid wall of ignorance, hypocrisy, meanness, and corruption. The wall had won.”⁷ The sentiment evoked by these words captures the way that many homosexuals living in the country felt during the 1920s and 1930s, when gays and lesbians found themselves continually marginalized and isolated. The idea of gays and

lesbians organizing themselves in order to further their own interests had been born, but it would take a world-changing event to restart the movement in a serious way.⁸

World War II, which the United States entered in December 1941, was just such an event, and it altered the country's social norms and traditions in profound and lasting ways. Due to the war effort's seemingly endless need for manpower both at home and abroad, women and men from all parts of the country left their hometowns, either drafted into the armed forces or drawn into the country's large cities by the promise of war-related jobs. Many gays and lesbians suddenly found themselves in new environments that lacked the rigid social structures of their hometowns, and, as they met others like themselves, they realized that they were not alone in their homosexuality. Gay and lesbian bars were founded or expanded, and local homosexual communities began to take root in places like New York and San Francisco. In addition, because of the country's great need for manpower, gays and lesbians were afforded greater freedom during World War II in the armed forces than they had been previously. Whereas in World War I men were often court-martialed and discharged for even suspected homosexual behavior or tendencies, during World War II men and women who were homosexual were allowed to remain enlisted, as long as they were not caught engaging in sexual acts. After the war, many homosexuals chose to settle in areas where they could find communities of people like themselves rather than move back to the towns and villages they had left when they entered the armed forces. This social migration and community formation would prove important to the creation of new gay and lesbian organizations following the war, but the larger social environment in which those groups were founded was not a welcoming one.⁹

The 1950s was marked by a societal push to erase the changes that had occurred during what had been a very stressful time in America and the world at large. A fear of difference and a desire to return to pre-World War II social structures, including the traditional family model, contributed to a rise in homosexual repression, stigmatization, and police brutality during the 1950s. In the context of the Cold War and the campaign against communism and deviance, homosexuality was seen as yet another threat to the American way of life. The words of Senator Kenneth Wherry, a Republican from Nebraska, capture the way that many Americans felt about homosexuals working for their government. In 1950, he posed a question on the Senate floor; “Can [you] think of a person who could be more dangerous to the United States of America than a pervert?” Homosexuals were thought to be morally and mentally weak individuals who were vulnerable to blackmail by America’s enemies.¹⁰ It was argued that they were more susceptible than the average federal employee to communist and enemy coercion and therefore could not be trusted with federal positions.¹¹ As a result, thousands of men and women lost their jobs, many due to flimsy evidence and hearsay. Many states and private businesses also attempted to purge homosexuals from their payrolls, and, as a result, a large number of gays and lesbians found themselves without jobs.¹²

In response to this hostile social climate, gay men and lesbians once again decided to try to organize early in the 1950s,¹³ chartering groups like the Mattachine Society in Los Angeles and the Daughters of Bilitis in San Francisco. These groups and the handful of others like them that were founded during this period were often plagued by internal disagreements about what goals to pursue and how to best work towards those goals, and some members argued for a radical approach while others tried to stay more moderate.¹⁴

Group members were aware that their organizations would be unpopular with many people across the country, and they were aware of what had happened to those who had moved to organize before them. The danger was compounded by the fact that the leaders of some homosexual groups of the 1950s were actually linked to other unpopular causes, including communism.¹⁵ All around the country police routinely raided gay bars and clubs, which had been opening in increasingly large numbers, and arrested those they found inside, a practice that continued through the 1960s. This fear of police action and constant employment discrimination caused many groups to reassess their beliefs and methodologies and to act in more moderate ways through the 1950s. This did not last forever, however, and by the end of the 1960s, these early groups had again become radicalized as a new generation began to assume leadership positions within them.¹⁶

During the 1960s, various minority groups throughout the country began working to alter their social standing in the traditional hierarchy of American society. African Americans fought for civil rights, and women organized to advance the causes of feminism and gender equality. College students became an important part of these social justice movements as more and more students became active in such issues as the decade progressed. These students saw themselves as members of national movements, fighting for large-scale social change, rather than just individuals involved in local demonstrations and events.¹⁷ Although explicit accounts are difficult to come by, gay and lesbian students almost certainly participated in these movements, and towards the end of the decade, they, too, began to organize. Other civil rights movements as well as national gay and lesbian organizations like the Daughters of Bilitis provided these students with examples of how to organize, and in 1967 the first student gay and lesbian groups were

founded on the campuses of Columbia University and New York University. However, these early groups lacked focus and were confronted with many of the same issues, including the fear of police discrimination faced by national organizations.¹⁸

Then, in the early morning hours of Saturday, June 28, 1969, events transpired that forever changed both the gay and lesbian student movement and the gay and lesbian movement generally. The patrons of a gay and lesbian bar called the Stonewall Inn, located in New York City's Greenwich Village, decided to fight back against a group of police officers who had come to arrest them for "inappropriate and disorderly conduct."¹⁹ Such raids had been taking place since before World War II, but this time the patrons and staff decided to rebel against their would-be oppressors.²⁰ When the police first arrived, the gay men and lesbians at the Stonewall reacted in a nonviolent way, mostly heckling the policy with words. It was not long, however, before they were throwing pennies, rocks, and larger objects like chairs and parking meters at the cops, and before the weekend was over, the bar had been completely burnt out by a firebomb someone had thrown through one of its windows.²¹ Gays and lesbians at other bars around the country had fought back against police raids before Stonewall, particularly at bars in Los Angeles, but none of those events had quite the effect of this particular uprising. The Stonewall Rebellion occurred at a time when demonstrations and marches were taking place all around the United States as people were fighting to end social injustice and the country's involvement in the Vietnam War. Stonewall captured the attention of gays and lesbians all over the country in a way that no other singular event had and showed them that it was possible to fight back.²²

After Stonewall, the existing gay and lesbian organizations around the country became reenergized and new chapters and organizations were founded throughout the United States. These groups espoused a new set of goals different from those of their predecessors, namely gay liberation, gay pride, and the decriminalization of homosexuality. Pre-Stonewall groups often had a difficult time reaching agreement about what causes to pursue, and their memberships were usually small. These groups had mainly worked to end persecution of homosexuals in terms of employment and police discrimination. New groups founded after Stonewall, however, sought not only to end the persecution of gay men and lesbians in these arenas, but also to stop all discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, to change societal views of homosexuality, and to allow gay men and lesbians to be open about their sexuality without fear of repercussions. The newly energized and continually enlarging movement not only modeled itself after the examples of other minority groups who had organized and fought against discrimination, but also its members actually saw their causes as similar to those of the black power movement and women's liberation movement.²³

Student gay and lesbian groups were significantly altered by the effects of the Stonewall Riots of 1969 in ways that were similar to the national movement as a whole. These students saw gay liberation and gay pride as rights that their universities should respect and endorse. New groups like the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) were created to further these new goals, and soon campuses and communities across the country had chapters of this and other organizations.²⁴ The Ohio State University and the University of Michigan were home to some of these new groups and soon they became embroiled in debates over the fate of their gay and lesbian students.

During the 1969-70 school year, the University of Michigan's Student Government Council officially approved the formation of two such student groups on campus—a student chapter of the GLF and the Radical Lesbians. This official approval allowed the groups the same rights, responsibilities, and privileges as all other recognized student groups on campus, thus beginning a new era at Michigan. In a similar fashion, Ohio State formally recognized the formation of its own student chapter of the GLF in March of 1971 and a Radical Lesbians group in the fall of 1971.²⁵ In 1967, there had been two on-campus homophile groups, and both were located in New York City, but by the end of 1971 more than 50 campuses across the nation claimed registered homophile student groups.²⁶ It was even more common for the communities in which campuses were located to have established gay and lesbian organizations, and students who attended colleges without registered gay student groups often joined such community organizations. In December 1971, the *Detroit News* reported that, “similar groups [to the GLF were] entrenched at nearly 200 U.S. colleges.”²⁷ In just four years, the gay and lesbian movement had experienced explosive growth at the college level.

It was in this context of increased gay and lesbian organization and visibility that the University of Michigan opened its Gay and Lesbian Advocacy Office (GLAO) during winter quarter, 1972.²⁸ The office was created as a result of pressure from several influences, not the least of which were demands from student and community gay groups.²⁹ As a result of that pressure and the increased visibility of gay issues in the media in general after Stonewall, Michigan's Office of Student Services (OSS), in conjunction with the Office of Religious Affairs, held a workshop on campus in January 1971 that sought to create a dialogue between gay and lesbian students and university

counselors and employees. Individuals from many university departments attended the workshop, including individuals from the housing office, admissions counselors, staff from the university's medical school, and faculty from the psychology department.³⁰ This day of dialogue was seen as a success by the homophile student groups on campus, for they felt that it created a sense within the OSS that the gay and lesbian population of Michigan needed to have staff members who were hired specifically to address their needs and concerns. This step was deemed necessary by the OSS after many non-student attendees revealed that they knew little or nothing about homosexuality and therefore felt that they could not adequately or fairly serve the homosexual student population's specific needs. OSS officials then decided that dedicated staff members needed to be hired to ensure that gay and lesbian students could seek help without fear of unnecessary exposure or personal risk.³¹

As a result of the workshop, a university committee was created in the spring of 1971 by the OSS. The committee's membership consisted mainly of individuals who had taken part in the workshop earlier in the year, and they ultimately recommended that the university create a new office to be staffed by two dedicated counselors, one female and one male, that would be housed within the OSS and would work to serve the needs of gay and lesbian students at Michigan. The committee saw this proposal as an extension of "the University's [recent] attempt[s] to aid oppressed minority groups," rather than as something completely radical or new.³² Similar positions existed in the early 1970s within the OSS for other minority groups at the university, including Native Americans and African Americans, and this fact strengthened the argument for the gay and lesbian counselors.³³ Gay and lesbian students were considered by the committee to be members

of a disadvantaged minority group that Michigan had a responsibility to serve. The committee felt that the creation of the proposed office was the best way for Michigan and the OSS to address the needs of the gay and lesbian student population. Many university departments, including the Office of Religious Affairs, endorsed the idea, and the committee submitted its proposal to the Vice President for Student Services Robert L. Knauss on May 19, 1971. The GLAO saw its first students in December of that year, less than eight months after the proposal had been submitted.³⁴

On December 10, 1971, *The Michigan Daily* ran a story about the new office. James Toy and Cynthia Gair, the first two employees of the GLAO, were interviewed by the paper and discussed their desire to bring gay and lesbian issues out into the wider university community. They expressed their hopes to serve as peer advisors for students and to work to dispel the stereotypes and myths surrounding gay life. They called themselves “advocates,” and this term came to be used in university documents to describe the two staff positions.³⁵ Knauss was also interviewed, and he stressed that the university felt that the two student assistants were part of a larger program in the OSS which was built around the idea of “Human Sexuality,” and that Toy and Gair were part of a larger group of around forty counselors who helped students having a difficult time with a variety of issues, including pregnancy and homosexuality.³⁶ The university was able to shield itself from some criticism because it marketed the new advocates to the community as part of a larger group that was created to help the student body with “sexual issues.” The GLAO advocates were seen as part of this group of counselors and not as part of those who were available to other minority groups, but the positions all had the same title of “advocate” and performed many of the same functions (counseling,

student group development, etc.) Homosexuality was (and remains) a controversial and divisive topic and it is likely that there would have been more opposition to the GLAO if the community felt that gays and lesbians were getting special treatment from the university. The idea of a university like Michigan publicly supporting gays and lesbians through something such as the GLAO was unheard of in 1971, and it is likely that the university presented it as a small part of a larger move to better educate Michigan's students on sexuality in general so that opposition to the office would be minimized. Perhaps it was due to this desire to talk about the GLAO as part of a greater whole that caused the author of the article to not mention that the GLAO was the first such office created and endorsed by any university in the country.

OSS officials chartered the GLAO during October 1971, but it did not open for business until December because the office's staff was planning and forming its structure and programming. The advocates utilized the committee's report from earlier in the year to determine organizational and policy structures of the office, and the GLAO's staff was responsible for creating a mission statement and outlining goals. As per the committee's recommendation, both staff positions were created as graduate assistant appointments, but they were initially only quarter-time appointments (the other sexuality counselors that Knauss spoke of in the December article were not housed in the GLAO and were budgeted and managed separately by the OSS). It was not specified how many hours they were required to work per week, but it became clear to the advocates that they would have to work many hours to keep up with the demand for their services. University officials granted the office a designated space and telephone, mailing, and office supply privileges in addition to money for staff salaries.³⁷ Working together, the two advocates

and individuals from the committee that had recommended the formation of the GLAO outlined six broad goals for the office in the winter of 1971. These were; to provide a peer advising service for gay and lesbian students, to work to educate both the gay and lesbian community and the student body as a whole about issues related to homosexuality, to assist gay and lesbian student groups in the planning of events, to function as a liaison between gay students and university offices, to advocate for gay issues within the city of Ann Arbor (such as gay pride weeks), and to work towards the formation of a gay studies program. Michigan students were considered the primary constituency of the GLAO, but gay and lesbian university staff members could also seek help from the GLAO if they needed it.³⁸

The GLAO partnered with community and campus lesbian and gay groups during its first year of operation to hold educational “speaker panels” around campus and to lobby the city of Ann Arbor regarding gay rights issues. This lobbying resulted in the city of Ann Arbor passing two pieces of legislation that were of particular importance to the gay community. The first prohibited discrimination against homosexuals within the city in terms of public accommodations, housing, and employment, and the second was a proclamation that designated a week in 1972 as “Gay Pride Week in Ann Arbor.”³⁹ Ann Arbor was the only city in the United States to issue such a proclamation during 1972, an indicator of how open the city was to recognizing gay and lesbian concerns.⁴⁰ Only 10 years prior to this proclamation, the city had engaged in raids on homosexual gathering places and arrested dozens of individuals.⁴¹

By 1972 Michigan’s GLAO was fully functional and working to further homosexual rights and awareness both in Ann Arbor and at the university, but at Ohio

State, students were only beginning to talk about the possibility of creating such an office on their campus. Indeed, in 1972, members of Ohio State's Gay Activists Alliance (GAA), the new name adopted by the Gay Liberation Front in the fall of 1971, were not even sure if their student organization would receive funding, let alone an office. The Council of Student Governments at Ohio State, which was responsible for allocating funds to student organizations on campus, awarded the GAA \$1000 to be used as operating funds for the group and the newsletter it published. This was the standard amount given to registered student groups at Ohio State during the early 1970s. However, university officials, including Edward Q. Moulton, Executive Vice President of Ohio State, were alerted that an article in one issue of the newsletter possibly contained objectionable material. The University Auditor's Office withheld further GAA funding and took back portions of the original \$1000, pending an investigation into the complaint. Officials were uncertain about whether or not the group had violated city and state laws on obscenity through its publication of an article containing "explicit descriptions and language," and cited this uncertainty as the reason funds were withheld.⁴²

GAA members met with and exchanged letters with Moulton, President Harold Enarson, members of the university's legal staff, and Vice President for Student Affairs Ted Robinson during of December 1972 and the early months of 1973. The GAA had its funding reinstated in early 1973, but only after the group was forced to state publicly that it would strive to "uphold the educational purpose of The Ohio State University" in its newsletter.⁴³ In a letter sent to Ted Robinson on January 24th of 1973, Patrick Miller, a member of the GAA, stated the group's position on the events that had transpired, saying that they resented the university's accusations of "illegal activity" and "violating of good

taste.”⁴⁴ University officials maintained that they had only temporarily suspended GAA funding because they wanted to investigate whether the group had violated the law, but members of the gay community felt that some Ohio State administrators had been motivated by homophobia.

After the funding controversy, members of the GAA found it increasingly difficult to find places to hold social events. The organization tried several locations, including the campus-area First Unitarian Church and the Ohio Union (the main student union on campus), but they often found these locations unsuitable for a number of reasons, including security and safety.⁴⁵ By the mid 1970s the GAA was no longer utilizing either venue to hold dances. Safety concerns were not unfounded, for GAA member Robert J. Smith reported that at one dance in the Union in 1974, some “superjocks thought they’d have a good time and beat up some queers.”⁴⁶ He reported that dance attendees had been harassed and that the money that the GAA had collected from ticket sales had been stolen.⁴⁷

Although Ohio State lacked a safe social space for gay and lesbian students in the 1970s, the community did obtain a space for other activities. In 1975, the GAA of Ohio State was given office space in the Ohio Union, the same place other student organizations were housed, but the room was very small and did not provide the club with sufficient space to meet its needs (although many groups at Ohio State faced a similar situation). GAA members used the space to hold club meetings, to plan social events, to develop their speakers bureau program, to run a telephone counseling and referral service, and to create a general space for group members and other gay and lesbian students to study and socialize. The space issue was further complicated because

the office was able to remain open only when members of the organization or their advisor, a faculty member, could find time to keep it open. For counseling concerns, the GAA was often forced to refer students to larger counseling centers in the Columbus area, such as the Open Door Clinic, which had staff members who worked specifically with gays and lesbians.⁴⁸ Located at 237 East 17th Street, the clinic was right in the heart of the off-campus community, but due to funding problems, the clinic was open for only during a limited number of hours each week throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s.⁴⁹

By contrast, lesbian and gay students at Michigan had more resources available to them than did those at Ohio State during the later 1970s because two advocates who were hired as quarter-time graduate assistants and a large number of volunteers staffed the GLAO. The total budget given to the office for the 1975-76 school year was \$8,380, although this figure did not include office space or supply costs. The advocates continually requested that their compensation be upgraded to fully represent the amount of work that they were doing for the GLAO. The male advocate at this time, James Toy, said in a memo that he routinely worked 60 hours a week or more on GLAO business and had done so since he was hired in 1971, but he was considered by the university to be a quarter-time employee and paid accordingly.⁵⁰ Due to the long hours that the advocates and a large number of volunteers worked to staff the GLAO, it was open most days and was very active in planning events around the university and the city of Ann Arbor. This level of functioning was possible, however, only because everyone who was involved had to work long hours. Some strain was lifted in 1977 when the office was given permission to hire three work-study students, who would be paid out of the university's work study

allowance and not GLAO funds, to help with its workload, and additional help came in 1978 when the advocate positions were upgraded to half-time appointments.⁵¹

Despite the work and increased visibility of the gay and lesbian student organizations at both Ohio State and Michigan during the early 1970s, the right of homosexual students to be free from discrimination and prejudice based on their sexual orientation was not endorsed in any formal way by either university. That changed in 1976 when Ohio State added “sexual orientation” to its nondiscrimination policy, which was and still is located within the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.⁵² The Code was created in 1971, largely in response to the student protests and uprisings of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and it was crafted in very specific and straightforward language.⁵³ When it was first introduced in 1971, it included protection for students from discrimination against “race, color, national origin, religious creed, political views, or sex.” The code was changed several times during the 1970s, adding handicapped and Vietnam-era veteran statuses, but these were responses to federal laws like the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 rather than student protest.⁵⁴ Although Ohio State added “sexual orientation” to the Code in 1976, this was not due to a similar federal impetus; rather, it reflected pressure from student groups and a desire enact a policy similar to that of the City of Columbus, which had added “sexual orientation” to the Columbus Code in the mid 1970s.⁵⁵

This addition did not occur without some administrative trepidation, however, as President Harold Enarson noted in a memo that he had “serious reservations” about the change and Student Affairs staff member Eric Gilbertson said that the decision was “dismaying.”⁵⁶ Nevertheless, student affairs staff voted the change into the Code.

Although gay and lesbian students considered the addition of “sexual orientation” to the Code a victory, it actually applied to only a narrow range of activities and did not protect gay and lesbian staff from discrimination in any way. It guaranteed three things for students: that any student could join any university-funded group he or she wished regardless of their sexual orientation, that the university would not tolerate harassment of individuals on the basis of their (perceived or actual) sexual orientation, and that no professor or instructor could discriminate against gays and lesbians in the classroom.⁵⁷ The city of Ann Arbor’s non-discrimination policy, enacted in 1972, was more comprehensive. However, Ohio State’s actions in 1976 did represent the first time gay and lesbian students had been *formally* protected at either Ohio State or the University of Michigan.

In 1981, the GLAO at Michigan was formally moved out of the OSS and was made a sub-unit of Counseling Services (CS). The office changed its name to the Lesbian and Gay Male Programming Office (LGMPO) shortly before the move. The name change reflected the general trend among gay and lesbian groups across the country that had begun adopting more depoliticized names throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The word “Liberation” had been in the name of the first post-Stonewall gay rights group, the GLF, but it was dropped in favor of “Activists” in the name of the second major national group, the GAA. Student groups at universities had followed this trend, such as Ohio State’s GLF name-change to the GAA in 1971 (and the GAA’s name-change to the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA) in the mid 1980s), and the name change for Michigan’s homosexual office was likely a similar move. The nature of the office did not change a great deal as a result of the move, but the focus of its mission did shift slightly away from

social activities and toward more counseling (including group therapy sessions), and educational services.⁵⁸ Administratively, LGMPO was placed into the “Human Sexuality” area of CS together with the Sexual Assault Prevention and Awareness Center. However, the LGMPO remained largely independent and its staff did not attend CS staff meetings or function under the CS mission statement or mandate. Although the LGMPO was independent, it did partner with CS on some aspects of work, such as the training of volunteers for peer counseling.⁵⁹

In March of 1984, University of Michigan President Harold Shapiro issued a statement aimed at clarifying the university’s stance on discrimination against students and staff based on their sexual orientation. In the statement he asserted that “It is the policy of the University of Michigan that an individual’s sexual orientation [should] be treated in the same manner [as race, sex, religion, and national origin],” and that “such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered [in admission, tenure, housing decisions, etc.] and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.”⁶⁰ The statement came after months of protest and lobbying by student groups and university employees, and those groups saw it as a step in the right direction. The presidential statement was considered to represent university policy, but the statement alone did not formally codify the President’s words into the university’s bylaws. As a result, many gays and lesbians feared that it could be revoked at any time, and they continued to lobby that “sexual orientation” be added to the non-discrimination policy of the university.

Although the policy was not changed in 1984, the university did create a task force to advise university departments about President Shapiro’s statement and to quell

fears that the university would not stand by it or ignore it. The task force advised departments to let their students and staff know that if they experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation they should notify their boss, supervisor, or ombudsman.⁶¹ Posters about the policy were distributed throughout the campus and the city of Ann Arbor by the task force in conjunction with the GLAO, featuring the tagline “Tell Someone! About Discrimination Against Lesbians and Gay Men!”⁶²

In 1985, Ohio State expanded its formal policy protections for gays and lesbians to faculty and staff. The university’s Human Resources Office added “sexual orientation” to its list of personal attributes for which a person’s employment and job advancement could not be impeded. This policy also forbade the university from discriminating against a gay or lesbian person who was applying for a job at Ohio State.⁶³ The change made it possible for gay and lesbian employees to be open about their sexuality without the fear of losing their jobs, although many employees chose to remain closeted for personal reasons.

Despite the increased formal policy protection for gay and lesbian students and staff that was formalized during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the idea of a gay and lesbian student office similar to Michigan’s GLAO did not gain significant ground at Ohio State. It would take a formalized push from a university office to spur Ohio State’s administration to act on the issue, a cause that the Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS) Office took up in 1986. According to Dr. Louise Douce, current Director of CCS at Ohio State and a CCS staff member since late 1977, the on-campus counseling center was one place where gay and lesbian students could, and often did, go for support during the mid and late 1970s and early 1980s. Members of the GAA had been referring people

to the office since 1975. CCS was better staffed and funded than other groups like the Open Door Clinic, but it was not targeted specifically to the needs of gay and lesbian students. However, many of the staff members at CCS were sympathetic to gay and lesbian concerns, and some of the staff were themselves homosexual.⁶⁴ Although gay and lesbian students had been lobbying for an on-campus gay and lesbian office since the 1970s, it would take a formal push from staff and interns at CCS to get Ohio State's administration to seriously consider the idea. CCS had been active in the area of minority affairs and counseling since the mid 1970s and had created (within itself) a Women's Student Services Office in 1975 and a Black Student Services Office in 1976. Much of the staff saw a gay and lesbian student services office as the next logical step.⁶⁵

Still, most members of the administration of Ohio State were not seriously considering even the possibility of creating such an office for gay and lesbian students during the early 1980s, much less working towards or advocating for it. In an interview in *The Ohio State Lantern*, the campus newspaper, on October 2, 1981, the Dean of Student Life said that he did not think that the creation of an office for gays and lesbians was appropriate. But previous articles in the paper, in which GAA members had discussed their own student-run office and had expressed hope that a university level office would be created, had caused some members of the public to think that the administration was, in fact in favor of the idea.⁶⁶

Mr. And Mrs. Daniel McCleese of Grove City, Ohio, both alumni of Ohio State, wrote a letter to President Edward Jennings in March of 1982, stating that they were "greatly disgruntled in response to the OSU Lantern article regarding portions of our tuition given to Gay groups on Campus."⁶⁷ They also said that they "...whole-heartedly

contest[ed] handing [their] hard-earned money over to a group that is clearly acting against the will of God.”⁶⁸ This letter is just one example from the steady stream of letters that the general public sent to members of Ohio State’s administration on the subject. It is unclear to what extent letters like this affected the decisions of the Ohio State administration, but Vice President for Student Affairs William R. Nester said in one letter of response that “...this University has not in the past, nor is it currently entertaining the development of an office of minority affairs for gay students.”⁶⁹

The same year that the McCleeses sent their letter, the university established a fund to award affirmative action grants to Ohio State offices and students who were interested in making the university a more welcoming place for individuals of minority groups. Upon the launch of the program, President Jennings noted that the purpose of the grants was to “...fulfill our inherent obligation to do all we can to seek the real goals of equal opportunity for all people.”⁷⁰ During the fall of 1986, the staff of CCS applied for one such grant with a proposal titled “A needs assessment and the development, implementation and evaluation of a program for the academic, personal, and social support of gay and lesbian, students, faculty, and staff.”⁷¹

According to Keith Oliver, a graduate administrative assistant at CCS, the goal for the grant money was to implement a three-step plan that would “work to help gay, lesbian, and bisexual students feel more comfortable and accepted [at Ohio State].”⁷² The first phase consisted of two studies on climate at Ohio State for gay and lesbian individuals, one of which surveyed 200 faculty and 400 students who self-identified as heterosexual and the second of which was completed by 180 people who self-identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.⁷³ This formalized survey process was carried out during the

fall of 1986. The second phase of the CCS plan was to use the knowledge gained from the surveys to create discussion in the university community about gay and lesbian issues on campus through a series of open forums during the winter of 1987. The last phase intended to take the data and ideas gathered in the first two phases and use them to create a plan to lobby for the establishment of a gay and lesbian student services office.⁷⁴

CCS received \$8,625 to implement their plan in late 1986 and began work right away. Of the 600 non-homosexuals surveyed, only 11 percent of the students and 15 percent of the faculty felt that “the general attitude toward gay/lesbian [was] somewhat positive [at Ohio State].”⁷⁵ Fifty-five percent of students and 48 percent of faculty felt that the university should implement some sort of formal support for the gay and lesbian population, but only 20 percent of students and 11 percent of faculty indicated that a permanent office dedicated to the issue would be their first choice for implementing support. Although the idea of an office for gay and lesbian students received the largest percentage of student votes, the faculty instead preferred the idea of workshops and/or programming. The survey also revealed that 77 percent of students and 54 percent of faculty were homophobic (which, for the purpose of the study, was defined as “the response of fear, disgust, anger, discomfort, and aversion when dealing with gay or lesbian people.”⁷⁶) Of those classified as homophobic, nearly 30 percent of students and 12 percent of faculty could be classified as “high-grade” homophobic, meaning that they were likely to speak and act openly about their homophobic feelings.⁷⁷

In the second survey, which was completed by 180 homosexual persons, 26 percent of respondents reported that they had been harassed because of their sexuality, and 90 percent reported that they were “aware of others experiencing” it around them.⁷⁸

Thirty-eight percent reported that they would like to leave Ohio State for a more supportive environment, and 72 percent said that they knew of someone who desired to leave Ohio State for that reason. Clearly, a significant percentage of the respondents reported that the “actual” environment for gays and lesbians at Ohio State was less supportive and less positive than their “preferred environment.”⁷⁹ With these survey results in hand, the members of the CCS staff who had been working on this issue proceeded to the next phase of their plan.

Believing that their survey data demonstrated a need to do something to combat the issue of homophobia and gay and lesbian student safety at Ohio State, CCS focused on determining what to do to change things so that they could create a report to take to President Edward Jennings. CCS used some of its grant money to hold open forums for university community members during the fall of 1986 and urged concerned individuals to come and share their ideas. In addition to the creation of an office, attendees suggested that gay studies classes be formed to educate students and that a university liaison position be created to specifically address the needs of gays and lesbians when policy decisions were being made at the administration’s highest levels. On the other hand, it seems that no one attended the forum that was opposed to the idea of the university moving forward on gay-affirmative policy.⁸⁰

In May 1987, Louise Douce and Keith Oliver presented the president’s office with a proposal outlining what CCS had found out through its affirmative action grant. The president’s office took the summer to consider the proposal; then, on September 22 1987, President Jennings contacted Dr. Douce and charged her to put together a committee to “develop a specific proposal for establishing an office of gay and lesbian

programming,” and to “...include specification of the mission, the organizational placement and arrangement of an office, and recommendations for staffing, budget, and physical location.”⁸¹ The President requested that initial findings and recommendations of the committee be completed by November 30, 1987.⁸² The short timeline on which Jennings requested a report demonstrated how important he, and by proxy the university as a whole, considered this issue. The statistics from the CCS research were the main, formal impetus that caused the President and the rest of the administration to seriously consider the creation of an office for gay and lesbian students in 1987, when only six years prior, university administrators had not thought such an idea appropriate for consideration.⁸³

People from a wide range of university offices and groups, including CCS, Residence and Dining Halls, and Human Resources, served as representatives to the committee, as did students from on-campus gay groups. The committee sent its final proposal to President Jennings on December 15, 1987, citing in their report the conclusion of human sexuality researcher Alfred Kinsey that 10 percent of all people are gay.⁸⁴ The committee proposed that if this were true, then approximately 5,400 students, 1,110 staff, and 400 faculty that were either lesbian or gay at Ohio State in 1987. Using these numbers and those they had collected from their own polling data, the committee concluded that an office was necessary to “protect the members and promote the interests of the second largest minority at OSU.”⁸⁵ The committee therefore recommended the establishment of an “Office of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Programming at The Ohio State University.”⁸⁶ The addition of the term “bisexual” to the office’s name was an attempt to allow the office to serve as many constituents as possible and was a reflection

of the fact that bisexual individuals were beginning to represent themselves as a separate but equal part of the gay and lesbian rights movement at the national level at this time.⁸⁷

In its report the committee also discussed other universities that had similar offices or had done research into creating one. As of 1987, only Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania had actually opened gay and lesbian student services offices. The fact that Michigan was only one of two universities in the country to have an established gay and lesbian student services office by 1987 speaks to the revolutionary nature of what had been created there in 1971. Not only had only one other university established an office after 15 years, only four others had even done serious research into the creation of one. These universities were the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the University of California at Santa Cruz, Yale University, and the University of California at Los Angeles. Michigan and Ohio State were the only schools not located on the coasts of the United States to even look into creating such an office. These facts speak to the truly groundbreaking nature of Michigan's LGMPO and Ohio State's proposed office. The committee highlighted the lack of formalized support structures for gay and lesbian students as another reason why Ohio State should move forward with the creation of an office of its own.⁸⁸

For budget, the committee estimated \$70,000 to \$105,125 would be required to run the office. This was much more than the budget for the LGMPO at Michigan because Ohio State's committee had recommended the hiring of one full time director for the office, while the LGMPO was still staffed by two half-time graduate assistants. The budget also included routine office expenses, space to house the office, one graduate assistant, and one secretary, expenses that Michigan did not list on the budget for the

LGMPO. The committee also outlined four broad types of activities that they thought the office should undertake in order to serve all students and staff at Ohio State. The first was to offer referral and advocacy services for all gay, lesbian, and bisexual concerns. The second was to facilitate gay-affirmative programming for the student body. The third was to work to educate the Ohio State community at large about gay, lesbian, and bisexual concerns. The fourth was to provide AIDS education and prevention programs for the student body. The committee recognized that the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA), which had formerly been the GAA, already attempted to provide Ohio State with many of these services, such as the referral program and the speakers bureau. However, the committee reasoned that it was unfair for Ohio State to expect a student group to perform all of these functions on their own.⁸⁹ The creation of this office would allow GALA to focus on whatever its members desired, just like all other student organizations. In the summary of their report, the committee noted,

“...[in the past] the University has relied primarily upon GALA, a student organization...to provide support, advocacy and programming for the entire University’s gay, lesbian and bisexual community. No other student organization has such expectations. No student organization should.”⁹⁰

The committee concluded that a full-time professional director was a necessary and vital expense, one that the office could not be successful without. Also, it was recommended that a graduate associate position be created to further ensure that the office would be sufficiently staffed to carry out its mission.⁹¹

The committee urged that the office’s opening be considered a very high priority for the university. They argued that quick action would allow the office to immediately begin working for the homosexual and bisexual community at The Ohio State University and to begin the task of educating Ohio State’s non-homosexual population. They saw

Ohio State as lagging behind on this issue and felt as though the existence of the two established offices at other schools, Michigan and the University of Pennsylvania, was a strong argument for the establishment of one at Ohio State.⁹² In January 1988, Sue Blanshan, a senior policy analyst in the President's Office, concluded that the committee's proposal and budget were reasonable and that the university should move forward with its implementation during the 1988-1989 budget cycle.⁹³ In a memo to President Jennings, Blanshan noted that a straw vote on the University Senate Committee on Women and Minorities, the highest legislative body on minority issues at Ohio State, indicated support for the idea of a permanent office and additional education programming. Furthermore, she suggested that the initiative be pushed through Student Affairs, which she believed was in a "general expansion mode for support services to targeted populations, e.g. Asian Americans, Hispanics."⁹⁴ The situation surrounding minority services offices at Ohio State during the early 1990s was similar to the one that had existed at Michigan in the early 1970s. The university had been moving to support various minority groups with offices and policies, and gays and lesbian were seen as another group whose needs the university needed to address specifically. This precedent for minority services made discussion of the office for gays and lesbians easier and strengthened the movement that was attempting to create one. It was thought that it would be harder for people to be against the office if it was seen a part of a larger plan to provide support for various minority groups rather than something that was unique to the gay and lesbian community.

Despite the committee's recommendations and the support of members of the administration like Blanshan, the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Student Services Office

(GLBSSO), would not become operational until the fall of 1990, almost three years after the original proposal had been submitted to President Jennings. The reasons behind the delay would eventually come to light, but initially they were unclear. In the fall of 1989, members of the original committee and other members of the gay and lesbian community at Ohio State created the Advisory Action Committee (AAC) to work to pressure the President's Office and Student Affairs to act on its "Safe Space Report" recommendations. The AAC organized a letter writing campaign to urge President Jennings and Vice Provost for Student Affairs Russell Spillman to take action.⁹⁵ In response to those letters, Spillman wrote President Jennings a letter on October 25, 1989 explaining that the office was not yet functional because Student Affairs did not have the money to fund it. He went on to ask the President for advice on how to fund the office without sending Student Affairs into "further deficits."⁹⁶

President Jennings' files contain a draft of his strongly worded reply, although the final version was not retained. In the draft, the President asserted that Spillman should have no trouble funding the office since "[Student Affairs'] total funds exceed 70 million dollars – we are talking about less than .07% of your budget." President Jennings continued, "...money is the excuse [for not funding the office] – your people are opposed [to the office]."⁹⁷ In response to this letter, Spillman immediately began working to establish the GLBSSO in November of 1989.⁹⁸

During the spring of 1990, a controversy erupted that highlighted the need for a gay and lesbian student office at Ohio State. Tom Fletcher and Mike Scarce, President and member of the Gay and Lesbian Alliance (GALA) respectively, became the center of a storm of protest and threats. The two men were roommates in Bradley Hall, a campus

residence hall, and the rumors that the two men were gay began circulating on their floor after Fletcher posted a sign outside their door advertising “National Coming Out Day” and was profiled in *the Lantern* in a series on “Non-traditional Student Leaders” during autumn quarter 1989.⁹⁹ Through the winter and spring quarters of 1990, Fletcher and Scarce were harassed with verbal threats as well as written messages on their door and in the bathroom on their floor.¹⁰⁰ The residents of the floor received notices three times regarding incidents that Scarce and Fletcher had reported to their RA and Hall Director during the school year, and the Hall Director attempted to intervene with several of the residents. The most explosive incident occurred in late May of 1990 when 15 letters, which had been slipped under residents’ doors the night before to serve as final warnings to stop the harassment, were found taped outside Scarce and Fletcher’s door in a square with the words “Die Fags!” written across them.¹⁰¹

The following morning, William H. Hall, Director of Residence Hall and Dining Services, ordered that Fletcher and Scarce receive around-the-clock security guards and be moved to an off campus apartment owned by Ohio State. He also demanded that the other 34 residents of Bradley Hall’s 3rd floor be removed from the residence hall.¹⁰² This decision incited protests and demonstrations on Ohio State’s campus by students, both for and against the university’s actions, and became a national news story. The students who opposed Hall’s decision claimed that it was unfair that Ohio State allowed gay roommates to live together while two students of the opposite sex were not allowed to cohabitate in the same room. The students who supported the two gay roommates argued that just because two people were gay, it did not mean that they were lovers, and they protested the university’s delay in rectifying the harassment situation.¹⁰³ Fletcher and

Scarce, as well as some parents of the displaced students, threatened legal action against the university by suing for emotional distress, although those threats never came to fruition in the form of actual litigation.¹⁰⁴ The university's handling of the Bradley Hall incident in May 1990 demonstrated to the community the hard stance that Ohio State would take on serious cases of student harassment and gay student rights, and it was in the shadow of this event that the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Student Services Office (GLBSSO) opened in July 1990.

The GLBSSO first began functioning in July 1990 as part of the Student Services Office and was given its own space in the Ohio Union later that summer. The office was meant to be a resource for the homosexual and bisexual communities at Ohio State, and it offered referrals to gay-friendly professionals (like doctors and lawyers) throughout the city to help with providing counseling for students. One of the primary agenda items for Phil Martin, the office's first director, was to begin keeping records and cataloguing reports of abuse (verbal, written, physical, or mental) of the gay, lesbian, and bisexual community at Ohio State. This was spurred partially by the events of May 1990, but also by a report that was released by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) in the summer of 1990. The report showed Ohio to be ranked number five in the nation for reported acts of violence against homosexuals in 1989, and it also put Ohio's college campuses at number five in the same category nationally.¹⁰⁵

This early concentration on the safety of gays and lesbians at Ohio State was different from Michigan's LGMPO first goals. That office had been decidedly more political in its original agenda, a fact that was a reflection of the time in which it was founded. The years leading up to 1971, when then LGMPO opened, had been turbulent

ones, both at Michigan and across the nation. Protests and marches were common as people fought against events such as the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War and issues such as racial inequality. Michigan's gay and lesbian services office was founded within this climate of unrest, and, accordingly, the office focused on political and policy issues relevant to the gay and lesbian community when it first began operating. The fact that the first employees of the office called themselves "advocates" demonstrates this. However, Michigan's office had changed over time, and it was similar in its setup and function to Ohio State's GLBSSO when it opened in 1990. At that time, both engaged in counseling services, student organization support, and "speakers bureau" programming, and Michigan's office had become increasingly focused on safety and the prevention of discrimination based on sexual orientation in its first 19 years. Just as its name had changed from the "Gay and Lesbian Advocacy Office" to the "Lesbian and Gay Male Programming Office," the focus had shifted towards being a service office for the gay and lesbian community rather than a strong political voice for it. Ohio State's GLBSSO filled much the same function.

Some Ohio lawmakers, however, did not think that the homosexual community should have its own office on campus, even if that office was dedicated to the safety of a student population. One such legislator was State Senator Gary C. Suhadolnik, who contacted the Ohio State Board of Trustees in October of 1990 to protest the opening of the GLBSSO. The Senator, a Republican from Parma Heights, threatened Ohio State President Gordon Gee and the Board that if they did not move to disband the office, he and other legislators who supported his views in the State Senate might be forced to use their influence on state legislation to negatively impact Ohio State. Suhadolnik claimed

that he was aware that homosexual abuse was going on, even on Ohio State's campus, but he was quoted in an article in the *Columbus Dispatch* as saying "... I believe that the current university structure can deal with that."¹⁰⁶ The same article cited him for his concern that an office of this type would "lend credibility to a gay, lesbian, and bisexual lifestyle."¹⁰⁷ The Senator also asked the Trustees whether or not they would set up an office for students who were members of the Nazi party if members of that group claimed discrimination was taking place at Ohio State.¹⁰⁸

Despite the threats made by Mr. Suhadolnik and other members of the Ohio General Assembly the GLBSSO remained open during the 1990-91 school year and beyond. A major factor in the university's continued support of the office in the face of such threats was Ohio State President E. Gordon Gee, who became President in 1990 and remained so until 1997. Gee was very active in supporting diversity at Ohio State, and he supported and recognized the homosexual community as an important part of that diversity. He supported the university's creation of the GLBSSO as well as other homosexual issues, such as a drive by some students and staff to change Ohio State policy to allow same-sex domestic partners to register with Ohio State and live in family housing. Several other prominent members of the university community also supported the idea, including William H. Hall, then Ohio State's director of Residence and Dining Halls, who had been the impetus behind the removal of the 34 students from Bradley Hall in 1990. Although a proposal to allow domestic partners to live in family housing was later dropped after Board of Trustees members became divided on the issue, Gee and others maintained their support for the idea (the Board of Trustees continued to consider this issue for another decade until voting unanimously to admit gay and lesbian students

to move into family housing in 2004).¹⁰⁹ It was through the actions of administrators such as President Gee and Vice President Hall that the homosexual community at Ohio State continued to be protected.

Comments like the ones made by Mr. Suhadolnik were also heard at Michigan when that university decided to move ahead on a long awaited change to its Bylaws. In 1993 the university's Board of Regents voted to add "sexual orientation" to its Regental Bylaws. The Bylaws serve as the ultimate authority on all acts, resolutions, regulations, and rules at the University of Michigan.¹¹⁰ The board did so because of student and community group pressure, as well as a feeling that it was time for Michigan to move forward on the issue. The most vocal opponent of the bylaw change was Michigan Board of Regents member Deane Baker, the only regent out of eight to vote against the change. He defended his vote in a letter to the university community released shortly after the bylaw change, in which he said that

"...the regents' decision to include the term "sexual orientation" in the Regents' Bylaw 14.06... [represents] a defining moment for [the University of Michigan]. When the regents added "sexual orientation" to Bylaw 14.06, they accepted the premise that homosexual or lesbian sexual practices are equivalent to heterosexual sexual practices... [This] is viewed by the majority of Michigan's electorate as wrong on the physiological, psychological, theological, and moral levels. [Michigan is standing in opposition to] ...four thousand years of nurturing and building the idea of the family as the corner stone of Western civilization [with this policy change]."¹¹¹

Furthermore, he cited several from what he calls a "cascade" of letters that had come into the university since the vote, denouncing the Regents' decision.¹¹²

The change did go thorough, however, with the final version of the bylaw reading, "The University is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for all persons regardless of race, sex, color, religion, creed, national origin or ancestry, age,

marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or Vietnam-era veteran status.”¹¹³ This new policy was more binding and formalized than any nondiscrimination statement or policy that had been adopted at Ohio State or Michigan before. The policies that had been in place at Ohio State since 1976 and Michigan since 1988 applied largely only to student groups, and Ohio State’s revision in 1985 and President Shapiro’s statement in 1984 extended the reach to university departments. But this change went above all of those and also affected real policy, such as family housing and employment benefits for partners of homosexual faculty and staff.¹¹⁴ As a result, the first gay male couple officially moved into university-run family housing in August 1994, and enrollment for health benefits for domestic partners began in November 1994.¹¹⁵ The majority of the individuals on the University of Michigan’s Board of Regents saw these changes as positive ones that made the school a more welcoming place. Despite dissent from individuals like Regent Baker, the school maintained its commitment to diversity and has not rescinded its decision to add “sexual orientation” to its bylaws.

With the passing of Bylaw 14.06, Michigan again moved ahead of Ohio State in recognizing and protecting its gay and lesbian population. Michigan created a special office to serve the needs of gays and lesbians 19 years before Ohio State, and although Ohio State acted first in protecting gays and lesbian students with a written policy in 1976, Bylaw 14.06 at Michigan was a much more comprehensive policy than what was put in place at Ohio State in 1985.

Many factors influenced both Ohio State’s and Michigan’s decisions and steps throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s regarding gay and lesbian rights. Although the degree to which those factors affected the actions of both schools was different, one

of the most influential factors was the same at both. That was pressure from individuals and departments within the universities who pushed for increased protection for gay and lesbian students. At both Michigan and Ohio State, the staffs of the on-campus counseling centers and student services offices were vital to the creation of the gay and lesbian student services offices at their respective campuses. Both interns and staff members, such as Dr. Louise Douce and Dr. Sue Blanshan of Ohio State and James Toy of Michigan, sat on or spearheaded the creation of committees to examine the issue, conducted surveys on the climate at their respective campuses, and held meetings with upper level administrators in order to keep the issue on the minds of those who made the decisions. Those who worked toward the creation of these offices and the alteration of campus policies regarding discrimination often acted as a result of interaction with gay and lesbian students at Michigan and Ohio State. The counseling centers in particular were places that homosexual students had come for support, and staff there interacted with those students and saw a need for change because the students were not getting the help they needed elsewhere in the universities.

Both universities also had Presidents who recognized the validity of homosexual staff and student desires for protection, including President Shapiro at Michigan and Presidents Jennings and Gee at Ohio State. This administrative support was vital to the success of the gay and lesbian movements on these campuses. However, the Presidents were only moved to act after demonstrations and meetings with individuals and committees who were advancing the cause of gay and lesbian equality. The universities did not act on the issue of their own accord; rather, small groups from throughout the two

schools and developments in the national gay and lesbian rights arena spurred them to action.

Moreover, both universities' decisions were influenced by the precedent that existed for helping minority groups with their own offices and policies, and as a result, gays and lesbians had an easier time arguing for their own protections. The universities saw homosexuals as another minority group to be protected, not as a group that was seeking special privileges. The precedent for minority protection helped both universities to quiet the critics of their gay and lesbian protections. The universities had a duty to protect their students and ensure the equality of education for all, and administrators believed minority students needed additional help to succeed. They moved to meet that need for various minority groups once individuals, committees, student groups, faculty, and campus administrative units had exposed it, and gay and lesbians were no exception.

However, Michigan and Ohio State did experience opposition to their homosexual affirmative policies. Despite a very vocal and long-standing campaign against the protections put in place at Ohio State and Michigan for homosexuals over the past several decades, the individuals and committees in positions of power have worked to ensure that historical protections remain in place and new ones are explored. Even as the state legislatures have continued to do battle over legislation relating to gay and lesbians, Michigan and Ohio State have remained firm in their commitment to nondiscrimination and inclusion for homosexuals.

Furthermore, things outside of the universities' communities have influenced their actions in recent years. Homosexuality is no longer criminalized and is a constant topic of discussion in national politics and popular culture. Gays and lesbians all over the

country have demanded that they be treated with respect and equality and many refuse to hide “in the closet” and deny their sexuality any longer. This increased visibility of gays and lesbians has forced schools like Ohio State and Michigan to take notice of their presence on campus and ensured that the topic is at least discussed during policy meetings.

Although Michigan and Ohio State had much in common as far as influences on their gay and lesbian affirmative actions, other factors differentiated the two schools. For example, the May 1990 event at Bradley Hall on Ohio State’s campus served to cement the need for a student services office in the minds of the administration. Michigan’s campus, which did experience homophobic events (as did Michigan’s community in Ann Arbor), did not have a similarly dramatic on-campus event occur. Michigan also experienced less dissent from members of their local community and state government than did Ohio State. This could be due to several factors, including Ann Arbor’s relatively small size compared to Columbus, a more liberal attitude of the city and the state, and/or the fact that Ohio State is situated only a few miles down the road from Ohio’s state capitol building.

The road from no protection (and sometime persecution) to policy protection and office support for gays and lesbians was not a straight or quick one at Michigan or at Ohio State. Ideas, support, and implementation often came in small pieces as various pressures came to bear on university officials at different times. The process also involved considerable opposition to any and all policies related to lesbian and gay rights—from other students, members of the public, and even members of the universities’ administrations. However, both universities repeatedly—if often slowly—

sided with gay and lesbian students and staff in creating protections for them so that they could feel free from discrimination at their universities. As a result, the two schools stand as examples of tolerance in the Midwest at a time when the future of gay and lesbian rights in the United States remains a mystery.

¹ Denise Wacker and Philip Sutin, "Police, 'U' Crack Down on Homosexual Activities," *Michigan Daily*, Jun. 28, 1962.

² Wacker and Philip Sutin, "Police, 'U' Crack Down."

³ Daniel Tsang, *The Politics of Lesbian and Gay Liberation*, Oct. 27, 1975, Box 10, Folder "Classes Misc. (2)," James Toy Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

⁴ Tsang, *The Politics of Lesbian and Gay Liberation*.

⁵ Barry D. Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement, Revised Edition* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), 87-88.

⁶ *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. (2003), <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/opinions/02pdf/02-102.pdf>.

⁷ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 46-47.

⁸ Robert B. Marks Ridinger, *The Gay and Lesbian Movement: References and Resources* (New York: G.K. Hall & Co., 1996), 15-16.

⁹ Allan Berube, "Marching to a Different Drummer: Lesbian and Gay GIs in World War II," in Martin Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey, Jr., eds., *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past* (New York: Penguin Group, 1989), 386-389.

¹⁰ David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press) 2004, 3-5.

¹¹ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 62.

¹² John D'Emilio, *Making Trouble: Essays on Gay History, Politics, and the University* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 60-61.

¹³ Johnson, *The Lavender Scare*, 3-5.

¹⁴ D'Emilio, *Making Trouble*, 17-18.

¹⁵ D'Emilio, *Making Trouble*, 55.

¹⁶ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 79.

¹⁷ Mark E. Boren, *Student Resistance: The History of an Unruly Subject*, (New York: Routledge) 2001, 138-141.

¹⁸ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 87.

¹⁹ D'Emilio, *Making Trouble*, 117-18.

²⁰ Ridinger, *The Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 63-64.

²¹ Adam, *The Rise of a Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 81.

²² Ridinger, *The Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 63-64.

²³ Ridinger, *The Gay and Lesbian Movement*, 63-64.

²⁴ Background for the Appointment of Two Student Assistants for Programming and Services in the Area of Homosexuality, Sep. 23, 1971, Box 1, Folder "LGMPO Background / Info," James Toy Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

²⁵ Elizabeth Vuchnich, "OSU Lesbian Works for Acceptance," *The Ohio State Lantern*, Apr. 4, 1972.

²⁶ Background for the Appointment of Two Student Assistants for Programming and Services in the Area of Homosexuality.

²⁷ John E. Peterson, "The Gay Scene at Michigan," *The Detroit News*, Dec. 28 1971.

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